

2001 AAHE ASSESSMENT RESEARCH FORUM

Enacting a Scholarship of Assessment

A Research Agenda

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

American Association for Higher Education Research Forum. (2001, June). *Enacting a scholarship of assessment: A research agenda*. Document created at the annual meeting of the American Association for Higher Education Assessment Conference, Denver, CO. www.aahe.org

This year, AAHE has expanded its annual Research Forum at the National Conference to also convene a Research Forum at the AAHE Assessment Conference. Our goal is to create a research agenda focused entirely on the research and scholarship of assessment. Participants have created this 2001 agenda through structured interactive discussions around critical themes emerging in the assessment community. As assessment is coming of age, the Research Forum asks:

- How do we best demonstrate that our students are learning?
- What are reliable, valid, and valuable alternative assessment methods?
- How does assessment contribute to student reflection on their learning?
- What is the role of the faculty in student and program assessment?
- How does assessment contribute to institutional transformation?

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What is the Purpose of the Research Forum? AAHE convened this inaugural Research Forum at its Assessment Conference as a compliment to the one it has held at its National Conference since 1985. The two parallel forums use interactive processes for achieving clarity about what research will benefit educational theory, policy, and practice. Thus, educators and researchers can continually rely on the Forum agenda as an up-to-date source of common research questions that flow from the year's most central educational issues. The two forums enable a dynamic discourse across assessment and research communities in higher education. The research forum at the Assessment Conference is integrated with the conference planning and contributes to the systematic study of assessment issues over time.

Why AAHE? AAHE has traditionally brought together a wide range of interested educators, and has been successful in defining current issues that stimulate a broad spectrum of higher education constituencies. The AAHE national conference is one of the most stimulating meetings of its kind. There are other forums at which research results are presented and discussed, but many of them are not regularly attended by or directed toward higher education administrators, faculty, and staff. AAHE membership has the desire and potential to stimulate research among its members, and to engage the research community in continual dialogue about research questions and findings that directly relate to educational practices for governance, for learning, teaching, and assessment, and for student development.

Why the AAHE Assessment Conference? Assessment practitioners are in the process of developing a different kind of community of practice. The Assessment Conference has been a place to share insights out of practice and to develop guidelines and other frameworks that cross diverse settings. A new emerging area is the scholarship of assessment. The Research Forum contributes by developing compelling questions through an interactive agenda and processes that support a deeper sense of community among assessment practitioners. By specifically addressing pressing questions systematically raised at prior Assessment Conferences, the assessment community develops the kind of continuity that makes a scholarship of assessment possible.

What is the Forum Process and Product?

1. **The Invitational Pre-conference Session.** Educators (selected from conference experts) generate research questions on topics that emerge as central to the conference theme through a specially designed group process. Experts on each topic serve as group leaders and synthesizers. Each topic group reviews the current issues around their topic and discusses with those who currently, or are likely to, research the year's agenda. Questions are synthesized in each group, and session leaders edit and prepare them for distribution at the all-conference session.
2. **The All-conference Forum and Panel.** Forum leaders bring the questions generated in the pre-conference session to the attention of the conference membership and involve the larger audience in discussion of issues and research questions in their own settings. Forum leaders also elicit discussion of research questions by a panel comprised of experts on the conference theme. Our panelists were *Trudy Banta*, Professor of Higher Education and Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis; *George Kuh*, Chancellors' Professor, Indiana University Bloomington, and Director, National Survey of Student Engagement; and *Marcia Mentkowski*, Professor of Psychology and Director, Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College. Group discussions on each topic followed the panel and allowed for more focused critique and discussion of the pre-conference questions.
3. **The Research Agenda and Its Dissemination.** Following the session, Forum leaders edit and integrate questions from topic group syntheses and individual work sheets for a final agenda. Thus, AAHE's agenda is a timely, collaborative and constructed product of interactive, on-the-spot discussion. It is another way of knowing about the professional interests of a wide range of educators. The research agenda is a product of a process that captures and articulates the informal conversation that occurs at AAHE meetings about what should be researched. Conference

presenters generate research questions on emerging topics in higher education, elicit questions from their colleagues, and then synthesize all questions. Dissemination and discussion of the agenda with researchers follows.

4. **Dissemination.** The agenda is disseminated to all contributors; participants are credited. Advisors to the Research Forum process and other associations/groups in higher education also receive the agenda. The history and rationale for the American Association for Higher Education Research Forum are described in M. Mentkowski and A. W. Chickering, Linking Educators and Researchers in Setting a Research Agenda for Undergraduate Education, *The Review of Higher Education*, 1987, 11(2), 137–160.

Prior Agendas:

- *The Classroom Researcher's Research Agenda*, 1987
- *A Research Agenda in Support of Our Highest Calling*, 1988
- *Improving the Odds for Student Achievement: A Research Agenda*, 1989
- *The Future of the Professoriate: A Look in the Mirror*, 1990
- *Achieving the Promise in Diversity: A Research Agenda to Inform the Issues*, 1991
- *Reclaiming the Public Trust: A Research Agenda to Explore the Validity of the Criticisms*, 1992
- *Reinventing Community: A Research Agenda to Create Common Purposes, Build Commitment, and Sustain Improvement*, 1993
- *A Research Agenda for Envisioning the 21st Century Academic Workplace Through Responsive Academic Citizenship*, 1994
- *The Engaged Campus: A Research Agenda to Serve Society's Needs*, 1995
- *Crossing Boundaries: A Research Agenda Toward Productive Learning and Community Renewal*, 1996
- *Learning, Teaching, and Technology: A Research Agenda for the Way We Work*, 1997
- *Taking Learning Seriously: A Research Agenda for Learning*, 1998
- *Organizing for Learning: A Research Agenda*, 1999
- *Diversity and Learning: A Research Agenda*, 2000
- *Private Gain and Public Good: A Research Agenda for Achieving Balance*, 2001

Previous agendas are available from Marcia Mentkowski, Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College, 3400 South 43rd Street, P.O. Box 343922, Milwaukee, WI 53234-3922.

2001 RESEARCH FORUM ORGANIZERS

Peggy Maki, Director, AAHE Assessment Forum

Marcia Mentkowski, Professor of Psychology and Director, Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College

Judith Reisetter Hart, Senior Research Analyst, Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College

Glen Rogers, Senior Research Associate, Educational Research and Evaluation, Alverno College

DEMONSTRATING STUDENT LEARNING

Over the last two decades, higher education has increasingly focused on demonstrating student learning. Regional accreditation agencies began to include student learning in their standards, and various discipline and professional accreditation groups have shown a similar concern for the learning outcomes of graduates in addition to content coverage. While student learning has always been inherent in higher education's mission, the concern for demonstration has frequently changed the character of higher education debates and sometimes put an emphasis on accountability that minimizes educational aspirations. At the same time, the questions of student learning are entangled with evolving definitions of the baccalaureate degree, just as cognitive research is creating new understandings of adult intelligence. Inevitably, institutions need to address these issues individually, but the common concerns create a basis for shared discussions. How do deep learning outcomes that encompass domains such as reasoning and civic responsibility emerge alongside the command of disciplinary content, and how will this create new forms for demonstration? How can we assess the contribution of service learning? What measurements or processes become important? How do these fit within the needs and parameters of courses and programs? And how does an advanced understanding of student learning fit within emerging concerns of legislators, employers, and the public, as well as the kind of assessment that is most needed?

On Assessment and Learning Outcomes

How do we use assessment results to improve student learning?

How do we think about what constitutes meaningful student learning and development?

How do faculty conceptualize student learning? How do students perceive the value of learning?

What is the match (alignment) between student expectations and actual student learning?

How does student engagement in learning relate to actual learning?

How are student learning outcomes related to degree requirements?

Can richer assessment processes enhance student/faculty learning?

In what circumstances do we have evidence that assessment results improved student learning?

What specific types of evidence capture particular and specific student learning? What kinds of assessment—*and what combinations*—capture *particular* kinds of student learning? What strategies are used to show student achievement? How do we help each other improve our designs to develop more comprehensive evidence for difference kinds of student learning?

How (what) evidence can we provide to show students are demonstrating expected learning outcomes?

How do we use principles of assessment to document student learning?

How can we assess transferable skills/abilities in both in-class and out-of-class experiences?
How can we effectively assess out-of-class activities (study abroad, co-curricular activities)?

What are the elements of self-assessment that enable students to transfer learning beyond the college campus?

How do we assess “further out” to see if learning is sustained or changes over time?

How can assessment serve our diverse range of students? How can we make assessments that are appropriate for all groups of students? How do we study the institutional and instructional context of student learning and different settings? For different groups of students?

How do we present evidence of student learning to our stakeholders? How do we more effectively engage our various stakeholders (especially employers and elected officials) in our planning or research on demonstrating student learning?

On Assessment Context

How does assessment of an ability differ inside and outside of the discipline/major? How well can critical thinking and other abilities be assessed outside the major? What interdisciplinary/institution-wide assessment tools are possible?

How can we more effectively engage employers (business & industry) in our discussions and planning for research on demonstration of student learning? How about elected officials?

What is the student’s role in assessment? How do we bring students into the assessment conversation?

Can we use assessment to show the value of higher education?

How does program review play into assessment?

What is the relationship between institutional mission/context and decisions about the processes and techniques to demonstrate student learning?

How can we study, objectively and effectively, the institutional factors that influence student learning (resources, faculty, leadership)?

How do we collect and disseminate assessment experience and information (institutional and national clearinghouse)?

With the conflicting demands of accrediting agencies, how do we balance the effectiveness of learning that is adapted to meet differing learning styles?

Given the power (conceptual, empirical, political, financial) of the testing industry, can/will scholars of assessment investigate and disseminate results on the impact of standardized testing on student’s opportunities to learn?

How do content area standards drive assessment?

On Faculty Development

How do we develop our scholarship of assessment around abilities that aren't currently much assessed (i.e., social/civic responsibility, student self-reflection, lifelong learning, service learning)?

How does assessment promote improvement of teaching?

What about instructor factors: educational philosophy, choice of structure, instructional processes?

Some faculty view their role only as *teaching* and have not made the paradigm shift to student learning.

Some focus on clear outcomes and portfolio assessment.

How is assessment not an "add-on" but integral to classroom activity? How do faculty provide compelling evidence of student achievement in their courses or programs?

Why does assessment sometimes seem threatening to faculty and staff? How can we make it less threatening?

What conceptualizations of student learning would be useful for faculty to improve their teaching (grades, professional organizational standards, student/faculty expectations, institutional expectations)?

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

At least since the time of the publication of *Student Involvement in Learning* in 1984, educational reform has envisioned alternative assessments as a lynchpin to transforming the culture of higher education practice and student learning. Portfolios and performance-based assessments have embraced a range of modalities (video, discussion, projects, simulations, etc.). Concepts of validity and reliability are being adjusted to meet the use of the open-ended nature of constructive responses, in which context and performance qualitatively vary across individuals. There is a greater recognition of how assessment purposes (such as student learning, measuring classroom achievement, meeting program or institutional accountability, transforming educational practice) affect interpretations of validity and reliability. As assessment practitioners, how do we represent differing purposes of assessment in our validity inquiries? At the same time, educational reform is animated by the vision of integrating various assessment purposes. For example, when students expect to learn and get feedback from assessments they are more motivated to perform, and inferences about their performance are more likely to be valid. As we bridge classroom assessment, program assessment, and large-scale assessment, how do we represent validity at different levels of practice (course/program/institution/system)?

New conceptions of validity also include the need to establish and take into account the consequences of assessment. This has increased our responsibility for assuring valid interpretations of student performance and to use multiple sources of information. How do we demonstrate the validity of alternative methods to stakeholders who want standardized tests? In what ways do we take into account opportunity to learn and the consequences of assessment as part of our validity inquiries?

On Emerging Conceptions and Standards

What should be the standards for establishing reliability and validity of various assessments, including instruments, designs, processes, and interpretations of data? Are there different standards for reliability and validity based on purpose, level, and type?

How do you translate between psychometric and “common” language?

Are traditional views (i.e., social science, quantitative) of reliability and validity broad enough to support the wide array of assessment processes and practices? How can we assure that requirements for “validity” and “reliability” don’t stifle the alternative assessment movement (such as using performance assessments)?

Should not the issue be the validity and reliability of measurement instruments of whatever type used, rather than focus on alternative assessments? Besides whatever the measure if it is not valid, if it does not matter that it is reliable; what would it be measuring?

Is there a common understanding of what is meant by reliable and valid assessment of student learning?

Does language of measurement miscommunicate what we mean by reliable and valid? How do we establish some common definitions that translate across disciplines?

How do you determine reliability and validity in relation to professional judgment? (Or, How can we use and validate qualitative measures?) How can multiple qualitative judgments be put into a “reliability” model?

Can alternative assessment tools find means to give the credibility that exists with standardized test—do they need to do so?

What would encourage institutions to use anecdotal data as real data?

On Validity, Constituencies, and Communication

What is the role of constituents’ (e.g., institution, program, student) feedback in establishing the validity of the use of assessment?

What is the role of students in establishing the validity of an assessment process?

How is validity conceptualized at several levels—curriculum, program, and institutional?

Is it possible to educate faculty who are committed to assessment in the methodologies they may wish to use? How do we educate the institutional community, about the importance of data integrity and its utilization?

How encourage others to do research with reliability? Can we support with advice on how big of a sample is needed?

How do we stimulate efforts to document reliability and validity of assessments among faculty unfamiliar with measurement theory? What are reasonable alternative (i.e., non-statistical) forms of evidence of reliability (i.e., accuracy) and validity (i.e., usefulness and meaningfulness) of assessment methods?

How do you build the relationships necessary for collaboration? And, in the longer term, how do we establish accurate and meaningful assessments throughout the institution?

How do we make data appropriate for the various constituencies? In what ways can it be made specific to the needs of divergent communities?

How do various ways of communicating assessment results affect their use by different audiences?

How can assessment practices be synthesized and shared across colleges?

How encourage people to share, across disciplines and institutions?

On Large Scale and Standardized Assessments

To what degree is evidence for reliability and validity taken into account in the various uses of large-scale assessments? To what degree does cost affect the choice of assessments and the nature of the outcomes assessed?

Do we need to take a more serious look at student motivation and validity?

How build on standard reliability scales that build on actual performance in the curriculum, not standardized but established and proven practice (e.g., essays read for elemental reading competence) (e.g., portfolio)?

How design research: When should standardized tests be used? Should schools have more of a say in selecting assessment instruments?

To move to a higher scholarship standard, do we need some uniformity and comparability of data across institutions? How might institutions use the shared data?

Who is doing research that enables comparisons against established baselines? Can we look to establish a model for institutional research? What resources should be committed to institutional office?

How can we translate qualitative, developmental statements into reliable measures?

To what degree (and how) can campuses turn standardized scale scores into information that affects teaching?

To what extent are expectations established by expert panels (including faculty) grounded in an understanding of what current achievement looks like relative to experts' most sophisticated conceptions of what effective performance might include?

How do we develop standards out of authentic assessment tools that can provide better hard evidence for policy makers than standardized tests do?

On the Consequences of Alternative Assessment and Validity

Who is doing and using the research? How is it used? How does consequential validity fit into this picture?

On a practical level, how do we demonstrate validity and reliability (or conversely, accuracy and meaningfulness) to accreditation committee?

What or when does a study of assessment measure the intended goal? How will it be cross-referenced to validate it so that others can use it? What is enough to measure intended goal?

How does research relate to planning? What about using data to drive change, integrating outcomes into all aspects of institutional management?

What types of evidence are important and feasible as part of an inquiry into the validity of intended consequences of alternative assessments? What types of evidence would help demonstrate learning from the process of assessment? What types of evidence would allow us to conclude that alternative assessments are functioning in practice to facilitate continuous improvement?

How can assessments support integration of outcomes across disciplines?

How can our uses of assessment contribute to a vision of the role of higher education that extends beyond knowledge to wisdom (to understanding that what one does affects a whole community)?

How can assessment draw forth spiritual dimensions that students and higher education seek?

How can assessments and the standards they reflect be responsive to diverse and nuanced approaches to achieving effectiveness, and to the continuously emerging needs of society?
How do we know that we are doing our best to assess for what is needed in the future?

How do you maintain academic freedom/flexibility in teaching and maintain uniformity of assessment standards/scales across institutions and disciplines?

TECHNOLOGY AND ASSESSMENT

As new technological horizons emerge for higher education, we need to continually revisit our current understandings of learning and the structures of educational practice and assessment. Web-based instruction, Internet connections, email capacities, portable laptops, and other technologies are described as creating new kinds of cultures of interaction and inquiry. How do we identify these changes and evaluate them? The integration of technology and assessment also promises to break the mold of how we assess. But how? For example, how can technology ease the process of assessment, increase its frequency, and improve its quality? How might various types of technology help us improve feedback to students? How might electronic portfolios assist students to engage in assessment of their own performance?

Distance learning has entered higher education both as a new way to deliver education and as a platform for new providers that bring particular perspectives on education, such as just-in-time learning and an emphasis on the delivery of content rather than the deeper wells of liberal learning. How can assessment informed by the purposes of institutional missions contribute to evaluating the quality of distance learning?

And so, keeping up with technology has become a new and costly imperative for higher education institutions. What kinds of initiatives are most needed, and how can we evaluate their costs and benefits?

On Extending Assessment Practice

Does the integration of technology in the classroom affect student learning in a positive way? To what extent? How do we know?

What are appropriate research methods for examining technology and assessment?

What are the implications of technology for assessing co-curricular, as well as classroom outcomes?

How are technological tools best used as instructional strategies?

How does the student's prior experience with technology itself impact student learning in the respective content area?

How can technology be used to profile strengths and weaknesses of student learning and teaching effectiveness?

How can technology improve students' attitudes toward formative assessment? How can it assist students in seeing patterns in their learning?

How can technology assist in assessing learning in large classes?

How does one adapt technology to meet all learning styles? How does adaptation to learning styles affect assessment in web-based courses?

Can new (post-web) technology be used to gather new data on student learning, across the curriculum, as it happens?

Can one data architecture encompass, without distortion, the student learning outcomes in a wide variety of disciplines and occupations?

How can we use technology to easily extract information of student learning on a common theme (e.g., writing, learning to work in groups) across multiple courses and disciplines for a “roll up” at the college (LA, science, fine and performing arts...) and at the university level for the broader institutional assessment?

On Promoting Transformation in Assessment

How does the use of technology impact the interaction between the teacher and the learner?

Can the faculty culture about assessment be transformed by technology?

Can technology provide a stimulus for rethinking assessment?

What is the impact of technology on alternative assessments?

TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONAL CULTURES

Educational reform in higher education has increasingly focused on the need to transform institutional cultures. Legislators emphasize accountability to particular societal needs, and educators emphasize improving particular forms of student learning. But there is also general agreement on the need to foster collaboration in achieving institutional missions and that this requires a culture of improvement. Assessment within institutions is generally seen as a key lever for creating an institutional culture of improvement, inquiry, responsibility, and (in the language of some circles) quality. For example, regional accreditation agencies in the U.S. have new emphases on demonstrating student learning outcomes and using assessment for improvement. What kind of assessment fosters a culture of collaborative inquiry into student learning outcomes? How will the roles, commitments, and identities of faculty and staff formed in one culture be appreciated or changed as part of the process of transforming culture? What role will accreditation play? What is most needed to achieve a transformation of institutional culture that achieves our shared and diverse purposes?

On Macro/Conceptual Questions

How is culture affected by internal and external forces?

What role do institutional and personal values play in assessment? In the institutional culture?

How is institutional culture formed/shaped/changed/persist?

Who sets the norms and constructs that define institutional culture?

Who are the drivers/definers of culture in an institution?

On Focus on Student Learning

What steps are necessary to keep the focus on student learning outcomes?

Where is assessment data really used and where does it inform improved student learning?

When does faculty and staff participation in assessment have a positive impact teaching and learning?

What are the best assessment strategies to improve student learning in those institutions that recognize the scholarship of assessment in promotion and tenure?

How transform a traditional research culture so that it also values scholarship of assessment?

On Culture of Assessment

What are the elements (e.g., trust, collaboration, general understanding) necessary for promoting a common culture of assessment?

How can institutions deal with negative results?

Why do we need to do this? It is a waste of time, if we never use the results. How do we know it is not really better to just wait and only do what we are made to?

What is the balance between the benefits of assessment per se and mandates to do it?

How do we make the shift from external to internally driven motivation re: assessment?

How many institutions recognize scholarship of assessment in promotion and tenure?

How is/can assessment (be) rewarded? Among faculty? Among students? Among administrators?

How do research paradigms effect the culture of assessment?

What are the potential rewards for creating a climate of assessment on our campuses?

Where does the institution focus its efforts and resources to make the most effective transformation to a culture of assessment?

How can we better understand the interrelationship of faculty, students, institutional structures, and external forces (i.e., accreditation and funding) on new or evolving campus assessment initiatives and the transformation of institutional culture?

Is there a difference in student learning outcomes between those institutions recognized for having a culture of assessment (best practice institutions) when compared with those without?

What are the characteristics of leadership that bring about the transformation to a culture of evidence and assessment? What are the processes campus administrators use to support it?

What is the evidence of the importance of addressing multiple institutional cultures in transforming the university culture?

How do we sustain a culture of assessment over time? How can we balance assessment that stresses collaboration with the one-on-one nature of student and faculty relationships? How can we balance the tension between collaboration and one-on-one approaches?

On Participation in Transformation

Who needs to have the ownership about assessment on my campus?

How can student and alumni participation/involvement be increased and improved/facilitated?

What are appropriate and reasonable expectations that an institution can have of faculty and students in terms of fuller involvement in assessment?

How does an institution engage in thoughtful, planned transformation processes that balance administrative leaders and “in the trenches” folks?

What is the role of grant offices in encouraging assessment projects? Is there a way to find funding sources for scholarship of assessment? (funding for the scholarship assessment?)

What is the role of the board of trustees in initiating, supporting, and/or validating assessment efforts? Where are they?

On Pragmatic/Practical Questions

How can assessment be incorporated in existing structure and culture, and planning and evaluation processes? How do we integrate assessment, accreditation, program review and evaluation, and quality improvement efforts?

What are the legitimate uses of assessment in an environment where accountability is often applied in an intrusive and abusive way?

Should we have separate assessment tracks for accountability and improvement?

How can we come to a common terminology to use across institutions?

How can we use data from institutions to construct a meta-case for the impact of institutional transformation?

Given increasing globalization, where can we make international comparisons of assessment approaches?

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT REFLECTION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Educational reform in higher education has included calls for active, collaborative, and lifelong learning. But for learning to also be deep and transformative, students need to reflect on their goals and unique identities and to develop their capacity to self assess performance. Student reflection has been a traditional goal of the liberal arts and has become critical to the role and identities of professionals in a fast changing environment where both purposes and skills must be renewed in practice. At the same time, however, faculty face increasing demands for performance and new curricular initiatives that could crowd out pedagogy explicitly designed to foster student reflection on their learning, growth, and performance. What kind of student reflection is most needed? What kind of learning opportunities foster this kind of reflection? How can assessment contribute?

On Defining Reflection

What is reflection? And, how does student reflection relate to student assessment?

How do you measure the many points at which reflection occurs?

Do we need an operational definition of assessment? Can objective measures assess reflection?

Is critical reflection on one's goals/assumptions a primary intended goal?

What is accepted as evidence of effective student reflection? How can we frame reflective opportunities so that they are deep and transformative?

Would reflection occur differently in different settings?

On Relation of Reflection to Learning

What specific kinds of reflection assist learning? Does reflection assist learners of all kinds?

How does reflection assist learning (a) in various learning environments (i.e., active learning, distance learning, problem-based learning), (b) with varied learners (i.e., traditional, first generation, adult learners), and (c) with varied subject matters (i.e., humanities, liberal arts, physical sciences)? How does assessment promote learning from the student perspective?

What are the desired outcomes of reflection? Do all kinds of reflection lead to these outcomes or can some kinds reinforce existing prejudices?

To what extent is reflection tied to transferability of knowledge?

Does reflection increase retention of learned material?

How does "reflection" fit into study skills—how do you use it as a study skill?

Can we teach students how to use reflective experiences as life-long learners? How?

How is reflection best assessed? What context? With courses? With capstone courses? What tools (i.e., with alumni surveys, qualitative analysis of written reflections, self-assessment surveys)? How is reflection learned?

How does diversity (age, gender, ethnicity) relate to a student's individual ways of reflection? Can reflection help students "own" their learning and become better learners?

How can reflective activities promote gen. ed. (the global) student outcomes?

How does reflection help students create a sense of professional and personal identity—sense of self as professional, as citizen, etc.?

On Facilitators and Hindrances

What are supports and hindrances to deep reflection? Is student reflection helped or hindered by early goal identification? Does assessing reflection promote reflection?

Does the belief that "more is more" get in the way of student reflection?

Do active learners reflect more after they have made useful applications?

Are some subject areas more conducive to student reflection?

What kinds of feedback loops will assist students to reflect on their performance?

How do faculty become committed to the process of student reflection?

In a multi-tasking world, how will students learn reflection? How do computer environments affect reflection?

On Reflection in Curricular and Co-curricular Experiences

How can you modify courses/program structures to facilitate the embedding of student reflection within the courses/programs?

How can opportunities for reflection be built into large classes?

Is reflection an explicit aspect of curriculum, if not, how do you assess it?

Is academic reflection a recognized component of a course-grading criterion? If not, how is it assessed/fostered?

What's the impact (positive and negative) of grades and goal of grade achievement on student learning vs. reflection (requiring students to be active reflectors—not just "achievers")?

If a reflective student is a more "effective" learner and makes wiser personal/academic/professional choices, then how do we assess the role of the faculty in promoting student reflection?

How can learning communities create reflective opportunities? Can they be measured/assessed?

How does service learning create reflective opportunities?

How can we ensure that students have continuous, cumulative, and intentional opportunities for reflection throughout their education?

How can we persuade faculty to include opportunities for self-assessment, critical reflection on their academic choices, and deep consideration of values in *all* disciplines?

Might an ongoing revision of a personal portfolio be structured in such a way as to force students to be reflective?

Can the application process for experiential learning opportunities include a structured demand for deep reflection?

What role might peer commentary on personal goals play in fostering student reflection?

Can career counselors and academic advisors pose questions that will force their “clients” to engage in reflection?

THE ROLE OF THE FACULTY IN ASSESSMENT

A common theme for institutions embarking upon significant curricular reform initiatives is the difficulty encountered in securing broad and sustained faculty participation. Faculty face a number of pressures such as promotion and tenure that frequently provide little incentive for participation. Others have had the experience of working diligently on significant proposals only to be frustrated by the responses of colleagues or the administration. Although assessment has not gone away as some had assumed, neither has it become a sustained and integrative part of faculty practice across the institution. Identified institutional and program assessment outcomes often seem to remain disconnected from curriculum embedded assessments, and assessments carried out at the institutional and program assessment level often seem of little interest to faculty beyond the momentary flurry of accreditation visits. What obstacles discourage faculty from pursuing meaningful inquiry into student learning outcomes in a way that would readily connect to institutional and program assessment? How can institutions recognize and reward faculty commitment to assessment? Are some obstacles bounded by the context of particular institutions? What should be the role of faculty in assessment?

On Connecting Different Levels of Assessment

How can we create avenues that bring faculty and administrators into a broadly shared view of assessment that links courses, programmatic activities, student experience, and institutional mission?

How can we build an assessment culture that builds on institutional outcomes?

How can faculty contribute to assessing outcomes beyond classroom specific outcomes (e.g., knowledge of diversity, civic engagement, reflective practice) that may be related to the mission of the college?

How do institutions use assessment data to foster change in teaching, advising, etc.?

How can faculty use “discipline-based” methods in implementing an assessment plan within the major?

Should standards for accreditation in each discipline be studied by the entire college community?

On Faculty Development

What might we do to more effectively support faculty in doing assessment?

What assessment methodologies that are germane to their disciplines can faculty use that advance their knowledge of student learning and their own research agendas

How do faculty best learn about the range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies that they can use separately or together without compromising rigor?

What factors contribute to faculty reluctance to embrace assessment?

What does it take for faculty to see assessment as a valuable tool for their work as teachers?

On Embedding Assessment in Learning and Teaching

How do we make assessment closer to what faculty already do? How can we frame assessment so that it captures the same excitement faculty bring to their teaching?

How do we make assessment a part of daily assessment work in various roles (e.g., teaching, advising, mentoring, administrating)? What might we do to more effectively support faculty in doing assessment?

What do we understand about the range of ways faculty effectively engage assessment to promote student learning? Based on what we know, could we design a national survey that could elicit the quality of faculty assessment in higher education?

How can assessment improve the learning climate on campus?

On Changes in Structure

What are the consequences/contingencies that interact with assessment activities?

What kinds of changes in faculty roles and rewards are institutions making when they transform toward a scholarship of assessment?

What are the tradeoffs between a faculty member's discipline-based research and scholarship and assessment activities?

What assessment methodologies might work differently at small vs. large institutions, professional vs. liberal arts, or research vs. teaching institutions?

How does assessment relate to academic freedom?

In what ways, if at all, does the articulation of explicit outcomes change faculty grading practices? Do explicit criteria open up alternatives to grading?

To what extent do future faculty need to develop an understanding of assessment before they begin college teaching?

To what extent is assessment *valued* by the university and its administrators?

PRE-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Karen W. Bauer
The University of Delaware

Jerry Berberet
Associated New American
Colleges

Nuria Cuevas
Norfolk State University

Paul F. Cunningham
Rivier College

Laurie DiPadova
University of Utah

Jerry Drake
George Mason University

Gloria Elliott
The College Board

Christina Frazier
Southeast Missouri State
University

Sherril Gelmon
Portland State University

Rajwant Gill, D.A.
Anne Arundel Community College

Kathryn Girton
University of Utah

Juan Gonzalez
Georgetown University

Ruth Green
George Mason University

Tom Henderson
Washington State University

Shree Iyengar
Anne Arundel Community College

Robin Jeffers
Bellevue Community College

Amos Lakos
University of Waterloo

Craig Lending
SUNY Brockport

Jasper Lesage
Dordt College

Georgine Loacker
Alverno College

Stacey Ludwig-Hardman
Western Governors University

Kathleen J. Mackin
College for Lifelong Learning

Margaret Malmberg
University of Charleston

Donald Marozas
SUNY Genesee

Heather Mayne
University of the Pacific

Edward McGlone
Emporia State University

Marcia Mentkowski
Alverno College

Larry Michaelsen
University of Oklahoma

Ted K. Miller
The University of Georgia

Shirley Morahan
Truman State University

Elaine Mueninghoff
University of Cincinnati, Clermont
College

Jean P. O'Brien
King's College

Kathleen O'Brien
Alverno College

David Oehler
Northwest Missouri State
University

Liz O'Shaughnessy
DeVry Institute, Long Beach

Catherine A. Palomba
Ball State University

Judy Patton
Portland State University

Judith Reisetter Hart
Alverno College

Glen Rogers
Alverno College

Elaynne Rousso
Bellevue Community College

Douglas M. Scheidt
SUNY, College at Brockport

Judeen Schulte
Alverno College

Jeffrey A. Seybert
Johnson County Community
College

Aman Shah
City University of Hong Kong

Joni E. Spurlin
North Carolina State University

Mary Stearns
University of Cincinnati, Clermont
College

Richard C. Sutton
Georgia Board of Regents

Randy Swing

Marilyn Verhey
San Francisco State University

Debra Way
University of Cincinnati, Clermont
College

Brenda Wentworth
Saint Cloud State University

Raymond J. Wlodkowski
Regis University

Susan Wolcott
WolcottLynch Associates

Michael Zeilik
University of New Mexico

ALL-CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Jerry Drake
George Mason University

Ruth Green
George Mason University

Margaret Malmberg
University of Charleston

Edward McGlone
Emporia State University

Shirley Morahan
Truman State University

Liz O'Shaughnessy
DeVry Institute, Long Beach

Judy Patton
Portland State University

Douglas M. Scheidt
SUNY, College at Brockport

Aman Shah
City University of Hong Kong

Donna Alexander
Wayne State University

Sally J. Andrade
The University of Texas at El Paso

S. Tyrone Barnsdale
Howard University

Patricia Brewer
Sinclair Community College

Darren Cambridge
University of Texas at Austin

Jim Cassidy
Mount Angel Seminary

O. Jackson Cole
Howard University

Laila E. Denoya
Independent Higher Education
Consultant

Rene Fenton
National-Louis University

Kenneth Gentili
Tacoma Community College

Grace Grant
Dominican University

Carolyn Haessig
SUNY College at Oneonta

Anne Hafner
California State University, LA

Olita D. Harris
San Diego State University

Kay Hegler
Doane College

Randy Hendricks
University of West Georgia

Catherine Honig
National-Louis University

J. Daniel House
Northern Illinois University

Kit Juniewicz
University of New England

Mike Kirk-Kuwaye
University of Hawaii at Manoa

Nanette S. Levinson
American University

Cliff Merryman
LeMoyne-Owen College

Jane Miller
Minnesota State Colleges &
Universities

Bert Nieves
Saint Peter's College

John O'Connor
AAHE

Janice Odom
North Carolina State University

David G. Payne
Binghamton University - SUNY

Suzanne Pieper
James Madison University

Paulette Popovich
University of Akron - Wayne College

Laura Pottle
Front Range Community College

Marie Revak
United States Air Force Academy

Fred D. Ribich
Wartburg College

Catherine Schmidts
College of Alameda

David Shupe
Minnesota State Colleges &
Universities

Nellie J. Smith
Rust College

H. Stephen Straight
Binghamton University - SUNY

SueAnn Strom
University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Nan Travers
NH Technical Institute

Wendy G. Troxel
Illinois State University

Joanne Walker Shields
East Tennessee State University

John T. Willse
UNC-Greensboro